

## **KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

### **STAFF NOTE**

#### **Review Item:**

Discussion with the Christian County School District on its Voluntary Partnership Assistance Team (VPAT) program

#### **Applicable Statutes or Regulations:**

NCLB Title 1, Part A, Sections 1111 and 1116; 703 KAR 5:120; 703 KAR 5:130; KRS 158.6451, 158.6453; 158.6455; 158.782; 158.805; 156.029; 156.070

#### **History/Background:**

***Existing Policy.*** As part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), states must use academic assessments and other indicators to annually review the progress of each district to determine whether the district makes Adequate Yearly Progress. The NCLB consequences are listed below in progression. Please note that once a district reaches Tier 3 status, the *state* must implement corrective action.

*Christian County Schools is in Tier 3* as a district and the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) is implementing *corrective action*. The district is a Voluntary Partnership Assistance Team district and federal funds have been deferred, as explained below. Christian County was asked to come to the October meeting due to the Kentucky Department of Education's concern over insufficient progress as outlined in the attached letter (Attachment A). Staff from Christian County will appear before the Board to respond to these concerns.

Districts not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) may fall into one of three (3) tiers with consequences as follows:

Tier 1 of Consequences = District has not made AYP for two consecutive years. Tier 1 consequences include the following:

- Revised Comprehensive District Improvement Plan (CDIP) – The district must revise its comprehensive improvement plan to improve student achievement throughout the district.
- Funds for Professional Development – The district must annually spend at least 10% of the Title I district allocation on professional development.
- Parent Notification – The district must promptly notify the parents of each student enrolled in the schools in that district that it is a tier district.

Tier 2 of Consequences = District has not made AYP for three years; continues to be identified for improvement (Tier 2). The three years do not have to be consecutive. Tier 2 includes all of the consequences listed in Tier 1 with no additional consequences.

Tier 3 of Consequences = District has not made AYP for four years; is identified for *corrective action*. The four years do not have to be consecutive. Tier 3 includes all of the consequences listed in Tier 1. Additionally, the state must take corrective action toward the district. The consequences continue until the district has made AYP for two consecutive years.

The district must continue all of the consequences in Tier 1. The district must continue to spend at least 10% of its Title I district allocation for professional development for each fiscal year that the district is in improvement.

#### District Revisions to its Comprehensive District Improvement Plan

The purpose of the comprehensive improvement plan is to improve student achievement throughout the district. The plan must be submitted to the Kentucky Department of Education for review and approval. The plan must be implemented as soon as possible after approval has been given and must specify how deferred funds will be used. The plan must:

1. Address the fundamental teaching and learning needs of schools in the district, especially the academic problems of low-achieving students;
2. Define specific measurable achievement goals and targets for each of the student populations whose disaggregated results are included on the NCLB report;
3. Incorporate strategies grounded in scientifically-based research that will strengthen instruction in core academic subjects;
4. Include, as appropriate, student learning activities before school, after school, during the summer, and during any extension of the school year;
5. Provide for high-quality professional development for instructional staff that focuses primarily on improved instruction;
6. Include strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the schools served by the district; and
7. Include a determination of why the district's previous plan did not bring about increased student academic achievement.

#### Corrective Action

Corrective action is the collective name given to steps taken by the state, which substantially and directly respond to serious instructional, managerial, and organizational problems in the district that jeopardize the likelihood that students will achieve proficiency in the core academic subjects of reading and mathematics. As required by NCLB, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) must take corrective action in a district that has not made AYP for four years (Tier 3 districts). *The state must provide technical assistance while instituting the corrective action.* KDE provides a system of assistance through one of the following. A district is selected for one of these:

- Voluntary Partnership Assistance Team (VPAT) – A five-member team (with representatives from KDE, Kentucky Association of School Superintendents and Kentucky School Boards Association) supports and directs the district in developing and implementing an improvement plan.

- State Assistance Team (SAT) – KDE cross-agency staff support the district in implementing an improvement plan.
- Network Assistance Team (NAT) – The district participates in a network proven effective in improving student achievement and building leadership capacity for support in implementing an improvement plan.

#### Deferring Title I, Part A Funds in Tier 3 Districts

KDE requires Tier 3 districts to defer Title I, Part A funds, which may be used to support the work generated from the assistance team and the district improvement plan. A Tier 3 district is required to reserve an amount as a part of the district set-asides. The funds cannot be expended until the district plan has been developed and approved.

Other funds must also be used to implement the revisions in the district plan. The 10% of the district Title I allocation for professional development must be directed toward identified needs and used to improve teaching across the district. *Christian County has been asked to direct 10% of its Title I funds for professional development. Additionally, 10% of all federal funds have been deferred for state-approved school improvement activities.*

KDE also has the option to defer additional Title I, Part A funds or reduce the amount of funds that may be used for district administrative costs.

#### Additional Concern

Christian County Schools also has two *schools* in Level 2 Assistance and one school in Level 3 Assistance according to the Kentucky Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS).

#### **Impact on Getting to Proficiency:**

The local district superintendent and board of education have the authority and responsibility to ensure their improvement plan include actions to assist and strengthen low-performing schools, that those actions are fully implemented, monitored, and adjusted to meet the needs of all students in the Christian County Schools. This is essential in assuring all students in the district reach proficiency.

#### **Contact Person(s):**

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**Deputy Commissioner**

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**Interim Commissioner of Education**

#### **Date:**

October 2007